

12 December 1997

Present: W. Christie, B. Cole, D. Hertzog (chair), M. Marx, W. Molzon,  
P. Meyers, F. Videbaek, P. Yamin (secretary)

Absent: P. Cushman, V. Greene

The meeting was convened at 1600; the Committee members introduced themselves and described their physics interests. Most of the major areas of AGS and RHIC are well represented as are many large and small projects aimed at the future. David Hertzog publicly thanked Bill Molzon for running the UEC for the past two years. Further, he remarked how the users makeup is and will be changing in character as we enter the RHIC era for BNL. Many of the concerns of the RHIC community became apparent during the course of the meeting as outlined below.

Michael Marx emphasized that even though the RHIC will be the major facility at BNL, there are other opportunities at the lab. These opportunities will be selectively pursued and will need the work of the UEC to advertise their attractiveness.

Regarding the UEC, Dave Hertzog said that the lab should make a serious contribution to the operation of the Users Group. He also added that it would be desirable to increase the participation of non-US users. Michael Marx suggested that an effort be made to solicit UEC nominations from these users. Peter Yamin said that the developing community of radiobiologists at the AGS had expressed an interest in becoming more active in the Users Group. Bill Christie volunteered to get in touch with Jack Miller at LBL, a principal coordinator of this activity.

At 1630 Tom Kirk joined the meeting. He began by saying that the Users can do things which other groups, particularly lab employees, cannot. He added that the FNAL Users Group has been effective in organizing meetings, letter-writing campaigns, and visits to Washington.

The discussion then focussed on office space for users. Michael Marx said that his survey had shown the need for ~200 desks for RHIC users by the end of 1998. He commented that there should be long-term planning for this, not "crisis management" as users arrive, one by one. Tom Kirk asked about the use of the space recently freed in Bldg. 902. Bill Christie said that STAR is waiting for its offices to be painted and for improved network connections; Michael said that PHENIX had already filled its allotment of space there. Tom said that the long-term plan (after 1999) is to move all but the RHIC cryogenic group out of Building 1005 and to devote its 2nd, 3rd and 4th floors to users. In the short term, Tom said that he would investigate the possibility of converting space in the basement of Bldg. 510 into a bullpen office. He also noted that space on the 3rd floor of this building will also (eventually) be made available for users. Tom commented that in compliance with the new accounting standards charges are now made for space. He said that the Director's Office will pay

these charges for users whose space is "actively" in use. Others will have to pay the charges (a few \$K/year) themselves. The intent of this scheme is to free up unused space.

Dave Hertzog asked about trailers. Michael Marx said that PHENIX is investigating the possibility of renting or buying office trailers. A preliminary estimate is that this will cost \$250K for 24 spaces, but he is developing better figures. Tom Kirk said that the lab would consider trailers. Bill Christie emphasized that the lab must make plans now for the >200 users who will eventually be on site. Tom said that inasmuch as the AGS Department and the RHIC Project will be united into the Accelerator Collider Department, his space plan will have to be integrated with Derek's, Satoshi's, and Mike Harrison's. However his intention is to convert most of Bldg. 1005 to users' offices, with overflow into the RHIC "white building." Mike Marx remarked that with several large experiments running at RHIC, there will be an increased need for meeting rooms which can accommodate >100 people.

Two general comments followed. Brian Cole said that the staffing of the cafeteria at breakfast will have to be increased to accommodate the several hundred RHIC users. Bill Molzon remarked that billing from BNL for charges made to university accounts is often so late that it difficult to verify the accuracy of the charges.

Dave Hertzog asked Tom Kirk what type of help the Users Group could give the lab management. Tom suggested organizing visits to representatives in Washington and increasing attendance at the annual users meeting. Michael Marx emphasized the second point, adding that the annual meeting at FNAL fills Wilson Hall. He suggested that if our annual meeting occurs during an AGS run, the day of the meeting should be devoted to machine studies in order to free physicists from shifts.

Tom left the meeting at about 1800, and the discussion turned to the inadequacies of the present AGS/RHIC Users web page. The general feeling was that the page is now a disaster because it not being maintained (e.g., "Hot News" is years old.), especially compared to pages from FNAL and TJNAF. Peter Yamin agreed that it is his responsibility to maintain this page, but that input is necessary from members of the UEC. Peter will identify someone (perhaps a part-time student computer whiz) who can do the actual coding, but will assume overall responsibility for the work.

There was a general, though inconclusive, discussion of possible dates for the annual meeting. Opinion alternated from attaching it to a large STAR or PHENIX meeting, or letting it stand alone. Dave Hertzog made a (warmly received) suggestion that he could make a presentation at STAR or PHENIX meetings in order to promote the Users Group.

Bill Christie suggested that the UEC (or some subset thereof) meet with the new lab management. As a Stony Brook faculty member, Michael Marx said that he would try to arrange such a meeting with Jack Marburger and/or Peter Paul.

Brian Cole suggested that the Users Group establish a presence at

future APS/DNP meetings.

Finally, Bill Molzon opened a discussion of the somewhat moribund NSF educational initiative. Marv Goldberg had suggested that NSF funds could be made available to universities for the support of students at Brookhaven. Universities would apply for NSF funds directly and preliminary discussions with the BNL Education Office had indicated that they would participate in the program by tracking student progress, etc. However, after a prototype proposal was written, university interest fizzled out. The general feeling among the UEC that this initiative as conceived was not too useful. The dollar cost of supporting a student at BNL is not high, but the effort devoted to supervision is high. Michael Marx said that BNL already has a good educational program, and Dave Hertzog asked "Why should I write a proposal for a student so Bill Morse can supervise him?" Brian Cole wanted to know if the NSF would contribute to the support of students currently on DoE grants. Dave Hertzog said that he would continue discussing the NSF education initiative with Tom Kirk.

The meeting concluded near 1930 with three action items:

1. Michael Marx will initiate discussions with the new management.
2. Peter Yamin will revive the web page, with input from Michael Marx, Brian Cole, and Bill Christie.
3. The UEC will consider 5/18-19 or some time in July as a date for the annual meeting.

---PY 12/15/97